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Nobel Author Links CIA to Ben Barka Plot

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And N. Y. Daily News

PARIS, Jan. 27.—The United States Central Intelligence Agency was accused Thursday of involvement in the kidnaping and probable death of Moroccan left wing opposition leader Mend Ben Barka. High French Government sources strongly denied the accusation.

Nobel Prize-winning author Francois Mauriac, a pro-Gaullist columnist for the magazine Le Figaro Litteraire, said in his column that even some Gaullists had begun sniping at President Charles de Gaulle over the Ben Barka affair.

CALLED AMBUSH

He called the incident an "anti-Gaullist ambush."

"A few days before or after Ben Barka's disappearance," wrote Mauriac, "a Moroccan friend who knows about such things talked to me about the close connection between Gen. (Mohammed) Oufkir (Moroccan Interior Minister suspected by some of being the man behind the kidnaping) and the American Secret Service."

"Whether it is true or not, I don't know," continued Mauriac. "But... if these services are innocent in this affair, then it is the devil who played for them."

COLUMN CRITICIZED

Mauriac's column was called "untrue" and "stupid" by French diplomats, because it complicates for public opinion what otherwise is a clear case of connivance between Moroccan secret service agents headed by Oufkir and some agents of the French secret services and police.

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Meanwhile, a dramatic aspect of the case fizzled when a tape-recording seized in the home of a key figure turned out to be nothing but the plot for a gangster movie.

The recording had been widely billed in advance as the eyewitness testimony of the late Georges Figon concerning his own, somewhat foggy role in the case.

LISTEN TO RECORDING

Several prominent persons in the scandal, including five defendants and the victim's brother, were crowded into a judicial chamber of the Palace of Justice to listen to the tape allegedly made by Figon about a week before his death.

When the playback machine was turned on, the first part of the tape proved to be the outline of a scenario for a cops-and-robbers story which Figon had been writing. The remainder of the tape was blank.